

# When Error is Taught

## **INTRODUCTION.**

- A. I would like to tell you that everyone will agree on religious matters and that everyone will teach the truth. However, I cannot tell you that for it is not so. There are plenty who teach error, who teach doctrine contrary to what was taught by Jesus and His apostles.
- B. Ephesians 4:1-6 teaches that there is only one Lord and one faith.
  - 1. Some teach that you can believe in the faith of your choice, as long as you believe in Jesus Christ.
  - 2. This is contrary to the one faith established by Jesus Christ. True faith in Jesus Christ will reveal that there is only one faith.
  - 3. Consider Jude 1:3. Jude refers to the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. One faith, not many faiths.
  - 4. In Mark 16:15-16, Jesus refers to the gospel, not gospels. There is only one gospel, one truth, and one faith.
- C. There are plenty of people in the world and even within the brotherhood who will teach things not taught in the word of God. When error is taught, what is our responsibility?
- D. With this lesson, we will show our responsibility in dealing with those who teach error.

## **I. RESPONSIBILITY TO TEST WHAT IS TAUGHT.**

- A. 1 John 4:1-6 clearly shows our responsibility to test the teachings espoused by another person.
  - 1. We are not to believe every “spirit.”
  - 2. We are to try or test every “spirit.”
  - 3. While the context is specifically referring to differentiating between those who either confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh or did not come in the flesh, the general statement of verse 1 applies to any area of Bible discussion and teaching.
- B. We can equip ourselves for these “tests” by studying the word of God.
  - 1. 2 Timothy 2:15 - rightly divide the word of Truth

2. Hebrews 5:12-14 - Comprehending the meat of the word comes with growth. (Cf. 1 Peter 2:2)
3. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - equipping for every good work.

## II. WHY IS ERROR TAUGHT?

- A. Some who teach error are sincerely wrong.
  1. I define sincerely wrong as this: While they are wrong, they are teachable because they desire to do what's right.
  2. Consider the following two examples:
    - a. Saul (Paul)
      - (1) Before his conversion, Saul did all things contrary to Jesus Christ. He was sincere, but in error. (Acts 26:9-11; 23:1)
      - (2) Once Saul saw the Truth, he turned to the Lord. (Acts 9:17-20)
    - b. Apollos
      - (1) Apollos was not teaching the baptism of Christ. Apollos was teaching error. (Acts 18:24-26)
      - (2) However, when Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos the way of God more perfectly, Apollos changed and taught others the Truth. (Acts 18:26-28)
  3. There are people like Paul and Apollos living today.
    - a. While they may be currently believing a lie, a false doctrine, because of their sincerity, they are always seeking the Truth.
    - b. In these cases, they will find the Truth or will accept the Truth when someone teaches them.
    - c. When you tell them they are teaching error and teach them from the Bible, they change.
  4. This can even apply to Christians who are in error in regards to a Bible teaching or doctrine. (Cf. Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20)
  5. Just because they are sincere does not mean that they are not wrong!
- B. Some teach error to cause division.
  1. Let us begin with those who cause foolish or ignorant disputes or questions. (2 Timothy 2:23-26)

2. The one who causes division is to be rejected. (Titus 3:9-11)
  3. These teachers of error are to be marked and avoided. (Romans 16:17-18)
    - a. Efforts to teach and correct have failed. (Cf. Galatians 6:1; James 1:19-20)
    - b. They are beyond teaching and beyond change. (Cf. Hebrews 6:4-6)
- C. Some teach error to deceive and mislead.
1. Let us begin with two examples:
    - a. Hymenaeus and Philetus. (2 Timothy 2:16-18)
    - b. Hymenaeus and Alexander. (1 Timothy 1:18-20)
  2. There are those who attempt to cause trouble for the church. They teach a perversion of the Gospel. (Galatians 1:6-9)
  3. There are those whom Peter refers to as “false teachers.” (2 Peter 2:1-3, 12-17, 18-19)
    - a. They bring in “destructive heresies.” (v 1)
    - b. They bring swift destruction upon themselves. (v 1)
    - c. They will lead others away from the Lord. (v 2)
    - d. Their motive is covetousness. (v 3)
    - e. They will use deceptive words. (v 3)
    - f. They speak evil of things they do not understand. (v 12)
    - g. They are spot and blemishes. (v 13)
    - h. They revel in their deceptions. (v 13)
    - i. They entice unstable souls. (v 14)
    - j. They have forsaken the right way and have gone astray. (v 15)
    - k. They use “great swelling words of emptiness” to allure Christians from the Lord. (v 18)
  4. There are those who appear as “ministers of righteousness,” but are working for the devil. (2 Corinthians 11:12-15)

## **CONCLUSION.**

- A. So, what do we do when we face a teacher of error?
  1. Correct and teach when possible. (Galatians 6:1-2; James 5:19-20) If they are

sincere, they will change when you show them their error.

2. Avoid when necessary.
    - a. They intend to deceive.
    - b. They serve their own “belly” or desires.
    - c. They cause division.
  3. In order to recognize error and take the necessary steps toward error, you must study God’s word and prepare yourself.
  4. Never take any teacher or preacher at only his word. Demand book, chapter, and verse.
- B. If you know someone is teaching error, then you have a responsibility to say something to them. You have a responsibility to correct them and teach. Do not let a brother go to hell because you chose to keep silent.

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